

---

## Hospitality, Working Sessions/Meetings, Institutional Events and Employee Functions Policy

---

<b>Policy Sponsor:</b>	Vice President, Finance and Administration
<b>Policy Contact:</b>	Director, Financial Services
<b>Policy Number:</b>	N/A
<b>Effective Date:</b>	September 15, 2017
<b>Approval Group:</b>	The Governors of Athabasca University
<b>Approval Date:</b>	September 15, 2017, Motion # 229-03
<b>Review Date:</b>	Biennially
<b>Procedure:</b>	<a href="#"><u>Hospitality, Working Sessions/Meetings, Institutional Events and Employee Functions Procedure</u></a>

---

### **Purpose**

This policy provides Athabasca University (the University), as a publicly funded institution, with a framework of accountability to ensure the effective stewardship of University funds in the payment of expenditures for food, beverages and other related costs for Hospitality, Working Sessions/Meetings, Institutional Events and Employee Functions.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that expenditures for Hospitality, Working Sessions/Meetings, Institutional Events and Employee functions:

- are managed in a cost-effective manner;
- have a clear business purpose which supports the institutional mission;
- make responsible use of public funds;
- are compliant with funding conditions and reporting requirements;
- are compliant with relevant federal and provincial legislation; and
- are identified in a consistent manner that facilitates public disclosure, where applicable.



Reimbursement to Board Members is not covered under this policy (refer to The Governors of Athabasca University Remuneration Policy and Procedure).  
For functions hosted on University property that involve the use of alcohol please refer to the Alcohol at University Events Policy.

## **Definitions**

<b>Account Holder</b>	The individual Employee who is responsible for expenditures against a specific budget or account.
<b>Designated Signing Officer</b>	An Employee who has delegated departmental expenditure approval responsibility as per the <a href="#">Delegation of Expenditure Approval Authority Policy</a> .
<b>Employee</b>	An individual under a contract of services to Athabasca University, as defined by the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) and the <a href="#">Income Tax Act</a> . The relationship is reflected in an employment contract.
<b>Employee Function</b>	Any function for which the primary purpose is to enable all University Employees, or all Employees within a University Unit, to celebrate a significant occasion or to receive recognition for their contributions.
<b>Executive Officers</b>	Includes the President and the Vice-Presidents.
<b>Hospitality</b>	Any function for which the primary purpose is to host (entertain) non-employees who are not engaged in work for the University such as donors, prospective employees and visitors or guests of the University, when that activity supports the educational, research or service activities of the University.
<b>Hosting</b>	Receiving or entertaining guests on behalf of the University.
<b>Retiring Employee</b>	An Employee who is 55 years of age or older and leaving the University with sufficient service to have qualified for a pension.
<b>Retirement Event</b>	Includes a reception, coffee party, buffet, luncheon or other similar social gathering to mark the retirement of a Retiring Employee.
<b>Senior Officer</b>	Any Executive Officer, Associate Vice-President, Director, Dean, Centre Chair, Registrar, or the University Secretary.



<b>Social Event</b>	An event organized by the University for a specific social purpose. Social Events will be infrequent and will include events such as department Christmas parties, team-building exercises, Retirement Events, or staff appreciation events.
<b>Institutional Event</b>	A University-wide or unit-hosted function that is not attributable to an Employee.
<b>Unit</b>	A department, centre, faculty or division.
<b>University Business</b>	Approved activities in support of the mission of Athabasca University.
<b>University Business Expense</b>	Reasonable (fair and moderate) out-of-pocket costs incurred by an Employee of the University, the business purpose of which is approved and supports the University's mission, regardless of the funding source.
<b>University Funds</b>	Includes all sources of revenue directed to an account managed by the University. It includes grant funds awarded from both University and non-University sources, as well as funds awarded under the terms of contracts.
<b>Working Session/Meeting</b>	Any assembly or gathering of Employees (primarily) for a purpose that supports the educational, research, or service activities of the University, for which expenditure for food and beverage is necessarily incurred.

### **Policy Statements**

1. The University recognizes that Employees may be required to participate in Hospitality, Working Sessions/Meetings, Institutional Events or Employee Functions while conducting University Business and may incur expenses in relation to these functions.
2. As a publicly funded institution, Athabasca University is accountable for the prudent and effective stewardship of University Funds. All expenditures under this policy must be made with due regard to economy and effectiveness in the stewardship of the University's financial resources.
3. For most units, expenditures for Hospitality, Working Sessions/Meetings, Institutional Events and Employee functions are expected to be minimal. Although limits on expenditures for these functions are stated within the procedure, units are not precluded from implementing more restrictive internal limits where appropriate.



4. This policy provides discretionary authority to a Senior Officer for the reasonable application of this policy, for ensuring guidelines and procedures are observed and that strict economy is exercised. This responsibility may be delegated, in writing, to a position that directly reports to a Senior Officer.
5. Expenditures incurred without approval from the Designated Signing Officer will be treated by the University as the obligation of the person incurring the expense and not that of the University, and as such will not be reimbursed or paid for by the University.
6. All expenditures and reimbursement under this policy must be in accordance with applicable federal and provincial legislation and regulations, including the Alberta *Post-Secondary Learning Act*, as well as all relevant University policies and procedures, including the Purchasing Policy and the Travel and Expense Claim Policy.
7. All expense claims must reflect prudent use of University resources, good judgment, due diligence to reasonable economy and be defensible to a reasonable and impartial observer.
8. Hospitality, Working Sessions/Meetings, Institutional Events and Employee Functions expenses will be disclosed, as per the [Government of Alberta - Public Disclosure of Travel and Expense Policy](#).
9. University Funds may be used for Hospitality, Working Sessions/Meetings, Institutional Events and Employee Functions that are:
  - a. directly related to University Business;
  - b. administered in accordance with the procedures attached to this policy and related policies;
  - c. permitted under the terms and conditions of the specific funding source, if applicable;
  - d. properly documented; and
  - e. approved by a Designated Signing Officer.
10. All Hospitality, Working Sessions/Meetings, Institutional Events and Employee Functions expenses must be for an approved University Business Expense.
11. Expenses incurred in relation to Hospitality, Working Sessions/Meetings, Institutional Events and Employee Functions may include:
  - meals or food;
  - beverages, including alcoholic beverages where permitted under this policy, unless prohibited under the terms of the particular funding source;
  - local transportation;
  - guest accommodation;
  - room rental and equipment.



12. Examples of appropriate Hospitality, Working Sessions/Meetings, Institutional Events and Employee Functions include:

- hosting official visitors to the University;
- meetings with prospective faculty, staff and graduate students;
- special meetings, planning sessions, training sessions or retreats involving Employees;
- conferences;
- seminars;
- hosting and events involving distinguished visiting lecturers;
- receptions following public lectures;
- public receptions to recognize the contribution of a major benefactor. Discretion should be exercised to balance the number of guests and the size of the donation.

13. Examples not considered to be appropriate Hospitality, Working Sessions/Meetings, Institutional Events and Employee Functions include:

- Employees Hosting other University Employees, except as noted above;
- regular department or faculty staff meetings attended solely by Employees;
- Social Events deemed to be personal in nature.

14. University Funds cannot be used to purchase alcoholic beverages for the following functions:

- meetings/working sessions;
- Employee Functions
- Hospitality.

15. University Funds may be used to purchase alcoholic beverages for the following functions, as per the limit outlined in the Hospitality, Working Sessions/Meetings, Institutional Events and Employee Functions Procedures:

- Institutional Events.

### **Applicable Legislation and Regulations**

[Government of Alberta - Public Disclosure of Travel and Expense Policy](#)

[Government of Alberta - Travel, Meal and Hospitality Expense Policy](#)

[Government of Alberta - Financial Administration Act](#)

[Government of Alberta - Post-Secondary Learning Act](#)

[Government of Alberta - Results-based Budgeting Act](#)

[Government of Canada – Income Tax Act](#)



## **Related References, Policies, Procedures and Forms**

Alcohol at University Events Policy

[Contract Administration Policy](#)

[Delegation of Expenditure Approval Authority Policy](#)

[Employee Gift Expenditure Policy](#)

[Purchasing Policy](#)

[Sponsorship, Donation and Gift Policy](#)

[The Governors of Athabasca University Remuneration Policy](#)

[Travel and Expense Claim Policy](#)

[Tutor Travel and Expense Claim Policy](#)

## **History**

The Governors of Athabasca University, September 15, 2017, Motion # 229-03 (approved)